

Jan's Journal



Thank you to Sandra Litt for her worship leadership today! We are now in the liturgical season of Pentecost. June is Pride Month. Thank you to the members of the Affirm Team for leading the worship service last Sunday!

Greetings from the beautiful Greek island of Patmos! We arrived here this morning at 5:30 a.m. There is quite a story about that, which I will save for a later time. Tomorrow we will visit the monastery, the Chora and castle and then the “Cave of the Apocolypse” where John the Theologian wrote the book of Revelation while living in exile on Patmos.

We have packed quite a lot into the past week! We arrived in Pamukkale on Thursday. Enroute from Izmir to Pamukkale, we visited Sardis and Philadelphia. In the Pamukkale region there are underground hot springs which contain a variety of minerals which are believed to have healing properties. The water is also very warm. Our hotel, and all the neighbouring hotels, offer thermal pools and spa packages. But we are not here for that! On Friday we visited the ancient ruins of the city of Hierapolis and then the ruins of Laodocia. A common thread through all of these places is that they were communities established thousands of years ago as ancient kingdoms of the Lydian peoples, the Carian peoples, or the Phrygian peoples who were then conquered by the Greeks. They became ancient Hellenistic colonies, which were subsequently conquered by the Romans about two centuries BC. At each site there are ruins of Greek temples, Roman ruins, perhaps an ancient synagogue, and then a Christian church.

On Saturday, we visited the ruins of the ancient city of Aphrodesias. There are marble quarries in this region. The Roman's established a school for sculpting at Aphrodisias. The museum here contains many examples of Roman sculptures. The temple of Aphrodite dates back to the third Century BC.

Our guide returned to Izmir by train on Saturday evening so that he could vote in the run-off election in his home riding on Sunday. On Sunday, we travelled to the ancient Aegean port of Bodrum. En route, we crossed a mountain range on narrow, winding roads in a thunderstorm! We passed a number of marble quarries.

Bodrum is a resort town. It's pristine beaches and warm Aegean waters attract tourists from every European country and the British Isles. We heard many different languages in the dining room and the hotel elevators! On Monday, we toured the ancient amphitheatre of Halicarnassus. It was originally built by Carian king Mausolos in the fourth century BC. It was renovated by the Romans. In spite of a major earthquake in the region in the 14th century, the theatre still stands and is used today for outdoor summer concerts. Next on our list was the Myndos gate. This would have been the western entrance to the ancient city of Helicarnassus.

We shifted to more recent times as we visited the Bodrum castle and the Underwater Archaeology Museum. The castle was built during the crusades by the Knights of St. John. It stands at the harbour and is a renowned and visible Bodrum landmark. The knights built the castle from the ruins of the ancient city of Helicarnassus. As I mentioned, there was a major earthquake in the 14th century which destroyed much of the city. Stone was readily available for the castle construction. The castle came into Ottoman possession in the 16th century and was basically an unused structure until the

mid-1960s. American underwater archaeologist, George Bass, began searching for sponges in the waters around Bodrum and ended up discovering a number of shipwrecks. Eventually Bodrum Castle became a secure location for housing the artifacts discovered. In 1982, a sponge diver from a village near Bodrum discovered artifacts from a shipwreck which was eventually determined to be a late Bronze Age ship from the 14th century BC. It's cargo suggests that it travelled from North Africa. Many of the treasures discovered near Uluburan, Turkey, are displayed at the museum in the castle.

We rose early yesterday morning to get to the ferry terminal by 8 a.m. Our ferry journey from Bodrum to Kos, a neighbouring Greek island, was smooth and uneventful. The ferry from Kos to Patmos was the challenge!

On Saturday, we will leave Patmos and return to Kos by ferry, then travel to the airport at Kos for a flight to Athens, our final destination of this journey.

As always, I am interested in hearing your thoughts!

You can reach me at: revjanmcc@gmail.com or on my cell phone: 905-630-8202.

Blessings,

Pastor Jan